**Reading Response 3: Fun with Doublethink**

Big Brother, the government of Oceania, attempts to control the ideas of the population by introducing an invented CSU Expository Reading and Writing Course 1984 – Student Version │ 4

language, “Newspeak.” Newspeak is a simplified version of “Oldspeak” or English. The grammar and rules of Newspeak are described in an appendix to the novel, but a few words are introduced early in the book.

• Ingsoc—“English Socialism,” the national ideology of Oceania.

• doublethink—The ability to believe two contradictory ideas at once. “War is peace” and “Freedom is slavery” are two examples. Doublethink is necessary for life in Oceania.

• thoughtcrime—Thinking thoughts that are against the party or that question party policies or actions. Thinking “Down with Big Brother” is an example. The Thought Police monitor everyone to detect possible thoughtcrime.

**Do you ever find yourself believing two contradictory notions at the same time? In *1984*, this is called “Doublethink.” It could be something as common as “He/she loves me; he/she loves me not.” Is it possible to believe both of those statements at once? Or if your grandmother or other loved one is very sick, is it possible to believe both that she will get well, but also that she will not? Is it possible to believe strongly in a principle such as “Honesty is the best policy” and then do the opposite for other reasons? In your group, discuss examples of doublethink in our daily lives. Write down the best examples in your *1984* notebook.**

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